# Cultural safety

Cultural safety involves creating an environment where individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds feel respected, valued, and understood within the context of their own cultural identity.

Cultural safety is necessary and foundational during program design, as it means that considerations of cultural diversity and inclusivity are integrated into every aspect of the program, from planning to implementation. This ensures that the program is not only accessible and relevant but also respectful and responsive to the cultural context of the community it serves.

**Cultural safety goes beyond mere tolerance and acceptance of diverse cultures.**

**While stating "we are tolerant and accept all people" is important, it differs significantly from "*This has been built with you specifically in mind*."**

The latter statement recognises the unique needs, perspectives, and experiences of specific cultural groups, ensuring that programs, services, or initiatives are tailored to address those needs effectively.

**Relevance to you**

Prioritising cultural safety in all programs, regardless of their target audience, is essential for ensuring that all individuals have equal access to services and opportunities, regardless of cultural background. It promotes social cohesion, fosters trust and respect within communities, and leads to more inclusive and effective programs.

Not only is cultural safety an integral part of program design, but it is also something that needs to be evidenced when applying for Youth Justice Crime Prevention grants.

**Relevance to Department of Youth Justice**

Cultural safety is paramount for the Department of Youth Justice, particularly in funding crime prevention programs. By adopting a people-first approach and prioritising cultural safety, we uphold the well-being, dignity, and safety of young people. This approach ensures that our initiatives resonate with the unique cultural identities and needs of the communities we serve.

The Department of Youth Justice works with First Nations young people, families, and communities to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system. A range of funded programs have been developed with and for First Nations young people and their families to ensure they have access to culturally responsive supports that aim to address the factors which may lead to offending or re-offending.

## Cultural safety in program design and grant applications

**Building cultural safety into program design**

When building cultural safety into your program design, it is essential to engage with the community in a respectful and inclusive manner to understand their needs and perspectives. This approach can take different forms depending on the level of involvement and collaboration.

By incorporating these approaches, you can ensure your program design respects and reflects the community's diverse cultural perspectives and experiences, ultimately leading to more meaningful and impactful outcomes.

Incorporating cultural safety into program design involves embedding accountability to Community in all the below steps:

By emphasising cultural safety in your program, you demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity, equity, and respect for diversity. It shows that your project is not just about accommodating different cultures but *actively prioritising* the needs and well-being of specific cultural groups within your community.

**Demonstrating cultural safety in delivery**

Putting cultural safety into action during program delivery involves:

This approach ensures that cultural safety principles are embedded in every aspect of program delivery, promoting inclusivity, respect, and engagement while also making space for cultural groups to lead their own self-determination.